



MAHA SHIVRATRI



Maha Shivratri is a Hindu festival celebrated annually in honour of the God Shiva. It is a festival marking of “overcoming darkness and ignorance” in life and the world. Shivaratri occurs every month, whereas Mahashivratri is the great night of Shiva that occurs only once a year. The 14th day of every lunar month is known as Shivratri. So, there are Shivratri in calendar year that occur a day prior to the new moon.

Generally we celebrated Maha Shivratri in Phalguna month. We use bael leaves for worshipping Lord Shiva. Bael leaves are also known as Wood Apple leaves. Nandi, Shiva’s favourite animal is a bull. During Samundra Manthan, when Shiva drank the deadly poison his throat got changed into blue colour. The Five foods of immortality are milk, clarified butter, curd, honey and sugar, which are placed before Shiva lingam.

As per belief, unmarried women pray to Lord Shiva for getting an ideal husband. Lord Shiva and Parvati have two children. Their names are Lord Ganesha & Lord Kartikeya. Lord Shiva is also known as the “destroyer” but in reality, it is he who destroys the impurities taking refuge in the human mind. Lord Shiva has so many names some of the names are Pashupatinath, Rudra, Natraj, Gangadhar, Trishuldhari, Mahesh, Shambhu, Nilkanth, Ambikanath, Jatadhara etc. In Gujarat, Maha Shivratri mela is held at Bhavnath near Junagadh.

The Third Eye, Snake, Trident, Crescent Moon, Ganga are the symbols of Lord Shiva. The Hindu trinity are Brahma, Vishnu & Mahesh. The three fundamental powers of Lord Shiva on his trishul symbolize of Will, Action & Knowledge. Kailash Parvata is believed to be the divine abode of Lord Shiva. The divine consort of Lord Shiva is Parvati.



According to Hindu mythology, Ganga is a sacred river which flows from the matted hair of Shiva. Shiva's body is said to consist of five mantra called Panchabrahman. Shiva was given the name "Neelkantha" because his throat is blue in colour. The dancing Posture of Lord Shiva is represented as "Nataraja".

On Mahashivratri night Lord Shiva performed the Tandav dance because Lord Shiva drank the poison so that he could save the world from deadly poison. Lord Shiva handle the poison by staying awake whole night. We offer Bael leaves on Mahashivratri. Ardhanarishwar avatar of Lord Shiva promoted gender equality. Lord Shiva tied up Ganga in his hair to stop Ganga from taking revenge.

Mahashivratri is basically celebrated in India along with Nepal. The festival is celebrated on the new moon day in the month of Phalguna conferring to the Hindu calendar. The devotees observe the fast on Mahashivratri followed by awaking whole night same day.

